

DICKEY COUNTY LEADER

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Calendar of Area Meetings



AA meetings will be every Tuesday evening at 8 p.m. at the Zion Lutheran Church in Ellendale.

TOPS - meets every Thursday at 308 1st Ave. N. in Ellendale at 5:30 p.m.

Coleman Museum - CLOSED for the season or Call for appointment 701-320-2794

Ellendale City Council - meets every 2nd Monday of the month at City Hall at 5:30 p.m.

Ellendale Area Arts Council meets the 1st Tuesday of every month 6:00 p.m. at the Fireside (Woodland Room)

Ellendale Park Board meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 5:30 p.m.

DICKEY COUNTY WIC In Ellendale the program is administered by Dickey County Health District Office on the 2nd and last Thursday of the month. Appointments are made through Central Valley HD. Call 701-252-8130 for appointments. For more information, call DCHD at

Transitions Column

By Ken Smith - Editor, Dickey County Leader

"You Could Learn That"

"I could teach anybody . . . to be a farmer. It's a process. You dig a hole, you put a seed in, you put dirt on top, add water, up comes the corn. You could learn that."

Former New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg had equally dismissive words for machinists. For "300 years of the industrial society," he said, "You put the piece of metal on the lathe, you turn the crank in the direction of the arrow, and you can have a job."

The Mayor's quotes have probably already been milked for more outrage than they're worth. To be fair to him and his supporters, I'll point to a transcript of the exchange: www.bit.ly/you-couldlearn. I'll also mention that he had some insightful things to say about the worth and abilities of older workers. Maybe, being 78, he knows more about older people generally than he does about farmers and industrial workers in particular. If so, good.

But the Mayor's statements radically underestimate the skill

and smarts that occupations like farming and machining have always demanded. It undermines these vocations in the minds of that (unfortunately large) portion of the public that doesn't know any better.

Any why are there so many who don't know better? Another Mike—Mike Rowe, best known for his TV show "Dirty Jobs"—has an opinion. For years, Rowe has demonstrated that the manual trades are profoundly useful and essential. And he has shown, time and time again, that they involve levels of skill, attention and decision making that often matches or surpasses anything possessed by those who make their living behind computer screens. Furthermore, Rowe points to hard data that shows we don't have a labor surplus in our country. We've got a severe labor shortage in skilled trades like plumbing, mechanics, welding and electrical work.

And why is this? Part of the reason is that youngsters tend to value what their education values, and neglect what their education neglects. "When we removed shop class from public

schools," says Rowe, "we sent an unmistakable message to millions of parents and kids. A chilling message. We told them, in the only way that really matters, that entire categories of jobs weren't even worth considering. But we didn't just tell them—we showed them. We literally removed all examples of skilled labor from view. Is there a more persuasive way to tell a kid what's irrelevant, than by removing it from view?"

Fortunately, most of us live in an area where these jobs aren't removed from view. But even here, where farming and trades vocations surround us, we might be surprised at how much we have lost, in terms of appreciating the value of manual labor.

For over 70 years—1899 to 1971—Ellendale was home to the State Normal & Industrial School (later known as UND-EB), one of the nation's best manual arts schools. To be a student there, or to know anything about the school, was to know that it placed a high value on the trades and on manual arts, and it didn't neglect the liberal arts. Its instructors were committed,

in the words of 19th century educational reformer Charles Ham, to the "the co-education of mind and hand." They believed fervently that to be a whole, fulfilled person, everyone ought to have some training in manual arts as well as liberal arts, regardless of eventual career path.

Ina Randall Graham, a member of the school's first graduating class, was a great defender of this view. She offered these words in the 1925 SNI yearbook:

"Looking back over twenty-five years of growth, the Class of 1901 feels that the N. I. is a school which has fostered the idea that work of any kind is honorable—that there is dignity in labor—be it that of the mechanic, the artisan, the farmer, the housewife, or the teacher. This outstanding feature has tended to break down class distinction and instilled among the students a democratic spirit which fulfills one of the principal objects for which schools are created."

Ina was right 95 years ago, and she is still right today. So, Mr. Bloomberg, pull up a desk, fold your hands, zip your lip, and listen. You could learn that!

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Step into the Past...



50 Years Ago:

City merchants to give away 26 bikes...One given away every Friday as the stores remain open. Ellendale Community Choir to present Easter Cantata. Nodak Cafe to hold Easter Buffet with ha, turkey and beef plus all the sides you would want... The Hoopers to perform at Riverside Supper Club... Ellendale American Legion Baseball seeking head coach... Lorelei received her Nurses Cap in Minot... Max Hagen elected Commander of Ellendale American Legion and Floyd Engbrecht Vice-Commander... Ellendale City Library to be open Friday Nights

40 Years Ago:

Trinity to undergo an evaluation... Rollie Greeno of Jamestown College to speak at athletic banquet... Mr. and Mrs. Art Steinwand return home after a 3-month stay in Florida with family... Joe Maly running for Alderman of 2nd Ward... Loren Nishek a member of Dickinson State College's wrestling team... Don Anderson running for Alderman of 1st Ward

30 Years Ago: